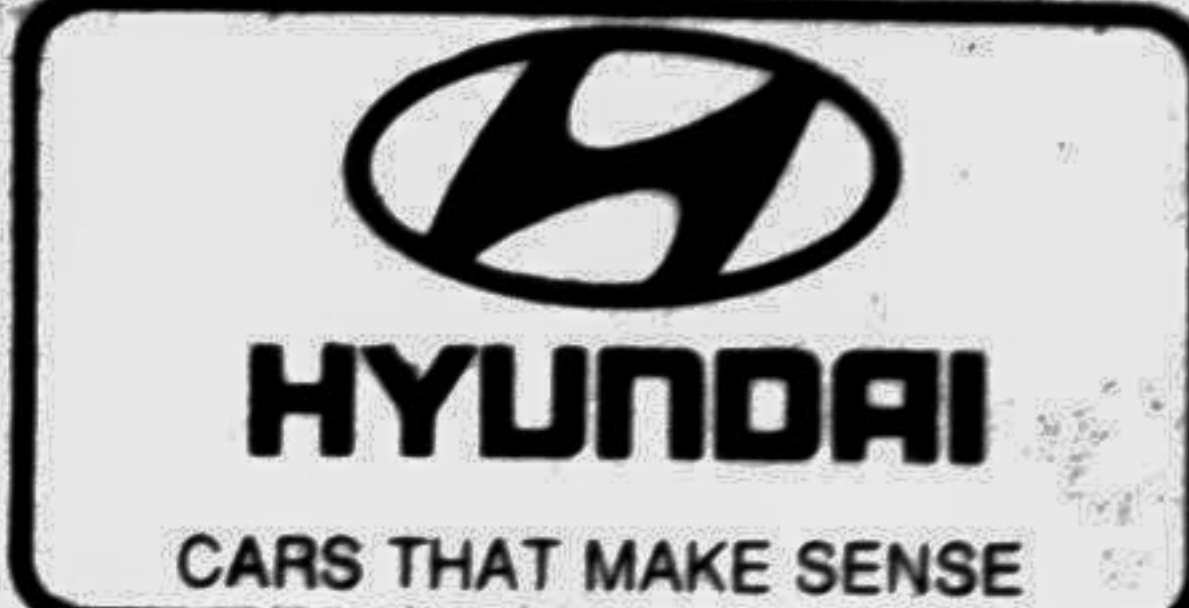


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DHAKA, SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 1996

UN chief proposes budget cut, job slash

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 17: Facing unyielding US pressure to slash costs, the UN chief proposed a new budget Friday that would cut 500 jobs and trim expenses by about 7 per cent, reports AP.

The United States welcomed the proposal. Washington is withholding an estimated 1.5 billion dollars from the organization, partly to pressure it to cut costs and increase efficiency.

In a budget outline released Friday, Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros-Ghali proposed spending 2.4 billion dollars for 1998 and 1999, a 6.9 per cent reduction in real terms from the previous two-year budget.

The figures do not consider inflation and currency fluctuations.

US Ambassador Madeleine Albright called the outline "an important and responsive step toward... fiscal reform" and said Washington would fight for the adoption of a budget based on the proposal when it comes before the 185-member General Assembly next year.

UNICEF installs 4790 tubewells in 11 S dists

BARISAL, Aug 17: The Public Health Engineering Department (PHE) in collaboration with UNICEF installed 4,790 tubewells in eleven southern districts under Barisal circle at an expenditure of Taka 12.31 crore during the last fiscal year, says BSS.

The districts covered by this programme included: Barisal, Jhalakathi, Bholu, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Gopalganj and Shariatpur.

According to an official source, of the total 2,433 were deep tubewells and 2,357 were shallow tubewells. Each deep tubewell costs Taka 45,000/= and shallow tubewells Taka 5,790/=, the source added.

Of the total, 786 deep and 275 shallow tubewells were sunk in Barisal district, 232 deep and 159 shallow tubewells in Jhalakathi, 210 deep tubewells in Patuakhali, 89 deep and 434 shallow tubewells in Pirojpur, 158 deep and 57 shallow tubewells in Barguna, 482 deep tubewells in Bholu, 315 shallow tubewells in Faridpur, 129 shallow tubewells in Rajbari, 255 deep and 203 shallow tubewells in Madaripur, 80 deep and 404 shallow tubewells in Gopalganj and 131 deep and 191 shallow tubewells in Shariatpur districts under the circle.

Agri-workshop concludes in Jamalpur

JAMALPUR, Aug 17: A three-day workshop on agriculture concluded at the office of the Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Directorate (AED) on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Local AED organised the workshop participated by 90 fertilizer and insecticides dealers, owners of nurseries and some farmers of the seven thanas of the district.

The participants were given training on effective use of insecticides, fertilizer and raising nurseries.

Deputy Director of AED Golam Mustafa was the coordinator of the workshop.

British ODA selects executives

The British government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) has selected two of Beximco Pharma Managers in its training and internal consultancy (TIC) programme, says a press release.

The two managers are Afsar Uddin Ahmed, Export Manager, and Mrs Momtaz Faruki Chowdhury, Medical Services Manager.



This selection is a recognition to Beximco's continued emphasis on Human Resource Development, the press release said.

TIC programme is introduced in Bangladesh during 1990-91 and selected candidates receive four months management development training in UK every year. The programme will continue for the next three years. For the first time executives from three private sector enterprises have been selected for this programme.

Apex Tannery and Prime Textiles executives are also selected for this programme.

Tk 123cr afforestation programme undertaken in ten districts

BARISAL, Aug 17: The Forest Department has undertaken a coastal afforestation programme involving Tk 123.16 crore in ten districts with the financial assistance from the World Bank and the NORAD during the current fiscal year, says BSS.

The project area falls in the districts of Patuakhali, Barguna, Bholu, Pirojpur, Bagerhat, Noakhali, Feni, Laxmipur, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

According to an official source, the programme includes the development and establishment of new nurseries, tree plantation along the highways, railways and the connecting roads and experi-

mental afforestations in sea beaches on about 26 lakh hectares of land.

Besides high yielding varieties of coconut saplings will be distributed free of cost among the people for creation of green belt on union parishads roads, around the dwelling houses, educational institutions, religious establishments, cyclone centres and the government office premises in the coastal districts, the source added.

The project papers says, about 1.50 crore people of the country living in the coastal areas of the districts are hit every year by about 12 to 13 tidal surges which take heavy

toils of lives and damages infrastructures.

The projects also aim at developing and increasing the forest resources and sources of income of the coastal people.

The five-year long programme beginning this fiscal year will raise the number of coconut trees on 1,400 kilometres.

Besides, 1,300 kilometres of embankment will be brought under nutshell, palm and date tree plantation and 4,720 kilometres highways, railways and rural union parishad roads will be afforested with different varieties of saplings. About 150 nurseries would also be brought under this programme, the source added.

Bangladesh to hold first trade show in Riyadh in Nov

Star Report

The first single country industrial exhibition of the Bangladesh private sector will be held in Riyadh in November this year to display diversified export items in a renewed bid to capture the Saudi market.

New Bangladesh Charge d'Affaires Muhammad Kamaluddin said at a press conference Riyadh on August 5 that ceramic products like dinner and tea sets, Chinaware, handicrafts and textiles are high quality products of his country which need to be introduced in the highly sophisticated Saudi market.

"Bangladesh exports to the Kingdom also include frozen fish, vegetables, garments, tea and even 'pulao' rice. There is a great scope for expanding trade between the Kingdom and Bangladesh," Kamaluddin said in his first press briefing.

He said one of his priorities would be to strengthen economic and commercial ties with the Kingdom. A joint economic commission meeting is already overdue between the two countries. It would possibly be held early 1997 to review our ties in wider spectrum," he added.

The envoy said the new government in Dhaka is keen to promote fraternal and brotherly ties with the Kingdom.

In the past, he added, the Kingdom's benevolent gestures at the time of natural calamities like floods and cyclones, have endeared the Saudi leadership to the people of Bangladesh.

"The Saudi Fund for Development has been helping many agro-economic projects in Bangladesh and several of those for rehabilitating our infrastructure are in the pipeline, which when implemented, would bring about socio-economic improvement in the living conditions," the envoy, who holds the rank of a minister, said.

The press briefing was also attended by First Secretary Ashraf Uddin, Economic and Commercial Counselor Syed Shah Alam, Labour Attache M. Kamaluddin Khan and Cultural and Press Attache A K M Hanif.

The envoy said that the government follows an open economic policy and would welcome Saudi investment in

various agro industrial projects in Bangladesh. He said exchange of visits of businessmen and investors would be encouraged between the two countries to deepen the existing ties.

The bilateral trade volume in 1995-96 reached a level of 11 million dollars which has a great scope of further expansion.

On the manpower front, the envoy said that there are over 600,000 Bangladesh workers in the Kingdom, out of which about 30 per cent constitute skilled workers.

Their foreign remittances in 1995 exceeded 600 million dollars up from 450 million dollars in 1994, he added.

In view of the Saudization programme for limousine drivers recruitment of drivers has stopped from last year. However, in many sectors the Saudization programme has not adversely affected the Bangladeshi manpower in this country. The quality of labour devotion and sincerity of these workers is widely recognized in Saudi Arabia," he commented.



Jamaluddin Ahmed FCA, Management & Financial Consultant of Rupali Insurance Company, inaugurated the 47th branch of the company at Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel recently. M G Quddus, Chairman, Z A Khan, Managing Director, and Sadeq Ansan, Deputy General Manager (branch in-charge) of the company, are also seen in the picture.

US, Japan fail to reach accord on new aviation rights

WASHINGTON, Aug 17: US and Japanese officials blamed each other Friday for failing to reach agreement in two days of tense talks on new aviation rights between the two countries, reports AP.

Assistant Secretary of State Alan Larson said the Japanese side asked compensation for rights to which the United States is already entitled.

The "relatively uncompetitive status of many of the Japanese carriers" prompted them to shy from competition and instead ask for "a more restrictive, more protected environment," he said.

In Tokyo, where the talks ended earlier Friday, the director of the international air transportation division at the transportation ministry, Norifumi Ide, said US negotiators said they didn't have a mandate to discuss a bilateral 1952 aviation treaty Japan wanted to talk about.

Instead, he said, the US side wanted to discuss requests by Federal Express, Northwest Airlines and United Airlines for approval to make more flights via Japan to other Asian destinations.

"I'm very much disappointed by the stubborn stance taken by the US side," said Ide, who said Japan is prepared to discuss both issues. "It is the US turn to move toward our position."

No date for another round of talks was set, he said.

Another senior ministry negotiator complained the US side originally said it would give Japanese and US concerns equal priority.

Larson said US officials had already discussed their next

Restriction on used car import in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 17: The South African Government will not allow cheap used cars to be imported into the country for commercial purposes, reports Xinhua.

In a national assembly debate on Thursday, Trade and Industry Minister Alex Erwin said importing cheap used cars would, through reduce car prices, undermine the country's motor industry.

Erwin said permits to import used cars had been given to private owners only, and in narrowly defined circumstances.

This meant that about 50 used cars a month entered South Africa legally, said the source.

Erwin said these used cars imports could not have any material effect on the motor industry because they constituted only about 0.15 per cent of the annual market for new cars in the country.

Permits are not issued for the import of used cars for commercial purposes," said the minister.

step and would consult with US airlines.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said the United States entered the talks with an affirmative, positive agenda, but Japan was "preventing us from moving forward."

Japan says the 1952 treaty grants unfairly large leeway to US carriers to stop in Japan, picking up cargo and passengers on the way to other destinations.

It is also seeking to expand opportunities for both nations air carriers.

Ide said he was not worried about the possibility of US sanctions, saying they would be a violation of the treaty which he said calls for arbitration if talks fail.

Both sides have threatened sanctions.

In response to Tokyo's failure to permit flights to third countries from Japan, Washington has started sanctions proceedings against Japan Airlines over the same cargo routes Federal Express wants to fly.

The two days of talks in Tokyo were the first since the current spat flared up last month. The two sides had reached a partial agreement on aviation issues in March.

The talks also covered disagreements over a United Airlines route from Tokyo to Los Angeles and JAL's Hiroshima-to-Honolulu flight.

BJKAD team calls on Biswas 'Govt's income, expenditure should go in systematic way'

President Abdur Rahman Biswas said government's income, expenditure and development activities are interrelated that should go in a systematic way for people's welfare and country's uplift, reports UNB.

Proper steps should be taken to utilise the enormous resources of the country for the onward march of the nation, he said while talking to a delegation of the Bangladesh Jatyatabadi Kar Ainjibi Dal (BJKAD) who called on him at Bangabhaban today (Saturday).

President Biswas also stressed production in mills and factories and expansion of market of the country's products abroad.

Exports and production

should be increased through booming production-oriented activities, he maintained.

The President noted with satisfaction that overall development activities of the country had so far yielded benefit to the common people. "All the people of various sections of society should cooperate with the government in materialising its development programme," he said.

Members of the delegation said they were doing their best to realise the taxes imposed by the government. They appreciated the President of some of their professional problems.

General Secretary of BJKAD Mohammad Bazul Huq led the delegation.

Workshop on 'ILO convention for farm labourers'

A workshop on "Approval of the ILO convention for farm labourers and formulation of law on that basis in the socio-economic perspective of Bangladesh will be held at the BARC auditorium today (Sunday), reports UNB.

Organised by Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labourers Federation (BAFLF), the workshop will be inaugurated by Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, at 9:30 in the morning.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director in Dhaka Paul Joseph Bailey and BANFLF Adviser Rashed Khan Menon will attend the function as special guests.

Leaders of different professional groups and farm labourers organisations, eminent economists, lawyers, NGO representatives and organisers from grassroots level will take part in the workshop.

The session is expected to finalise recommendations with regard to the ILO convention approval for workers in the farm sector.

Certificate on bank management awarded at BIBM

A certificate awarding ceremony of a two-month long advanced course on "Bank Management for the executives of banks and financial institutions" was held on Saturday, says a BIBM press release.

Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management conducted this course with a view to familiarising the bank executives with the rapid changes that have been taking place in the banking and financial environment and to create awareness among the participants of the potentials of modern global banking and financial market.

A week-long study tour in different banks and financial institutions in Bombay, India was also a part of this training programme to have practical and theoretical knowledge about the recent changes in banking practices and institutional training methods of India.

The team was headed by Sk. Harun-ar Rashid, coordinator of the course and faculty member of BIBM.

The function was chaired by A.H.M. Nurul Islam Choudhury, Director General, BIBM. He also distributed certificates among the participants.

Speaking on the occasion Choudhury expressed the hope that the course would help the bankers to be knowledgeable and efficient to solve problems regarding financial institutions management.

He advised the bankers to use the modern management techniques to increase skill, accuracy and transparency at micro and macro level to cope with present global economic situation.

A total of eighteen bankers participated in the course.

New GM of Sadharan Bima Corp



Md Lutfor Rahman has been promoted General Manager of Sadharan Bima Corporation, says a press release.

He has taken over the charge of the Establishment Division at the head office of the corporation.

Prior to his promotion, Lutfor Rahman was the Deputy General Manager.

Previously he worked in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna and Comilla zonal offices in various capacities for a long time.

China's economy grows

BEIJING, Aug 17: China's fixed capital investments grew to 586 billion yuan (70.61 million dollars) in the first seven months of this year in a 20.9 per cent increase over the same period last year, the government said Friday, reports AFP.

The 24.9 per cent increase in July of this year compared to last year was particularly marked, but remained "within reasonable limits," the State Bureau of statistics said in a statement.

The government had planned to hold such investments to less than 20 per cent in 1996, compared with more than 30 per cent in recent years, in order to bring inflation down below the 10-per cent threshold.

The growth in retail prices during the first seven months of the year reached 6.9 per cent, and the consumer price index was 9.1 per cent, compared with the same period last year.



Clients of Leclerc supermarket at Montauban in France on Friday leave the supermarket where hundreds of farmers unloaded tons of peaches and nectarines to protest against their dropping sales and the bad quality of the supermarket products. —AFP/UNB photo

India's move to strengthen ties with ASEAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 17: India, weeks after becoming a full dialogue partner of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), will further cement its ties with the region with External Affairs Minister, I K Gujral, visiting Malaysia and Singapore from tomorrow, reports PTI.

This is Gujral's first bilateral visit to the region. India's trade with both the countries has been on a steady upward swing and Malaysia and Singapore are among the top ten investors in India.

India also looks at the full dialogue partner status as a "window" to its progressive participation in other ASEAN related forums like the APEC and Asia Europe meeting or ASEM.

Gujral's first half will be Kuala Lumpur where he will meet his Malaysian counterpart, Badawi. He will also meet the ministers of works and information.

Among the issues expected to come up are Malaysian investment in infrastructure, opportunities for Indian investment and cooperation in Malaysia, progress on the visa front and other issues concerning Indo-Malaysians.

This is Gujral's first purely bilateral visit to the region which will intensify ties naturally everyone is excited," said acting High Commissioner Deepak Vohra.

Unemployment scene in five big nations

WASHINGTON, Aug 17: US unemployment has dropped by almost half in the past 15 years while Japan, Germany and other competing countries have shown a strong rise with little sign of improvement, reports AP.

The long-term trends emerge from detailed figures that the US Labour Department has just published, covering the last third of the century.

American joblessness peaked at 9.7 per cent in 1982. It declined steadily for the next seven years, rising to a lower peak of 7.5 per cent in 1992, President Clinton's first full year.

Then it dropped again, hovering in recent months around the 5.6 per cent level it reached last year. It stood at 5.4 per cent in July.

Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s Japan kept its unemployment rate below 2 per cent, breaking that barrier only in 1976. A slow, steady rise over two decades pushed it over 3.5 per cent this year.

France and especially West Germany also had a history of

keeping unemployment low in the 1960s and early 1970s. But in 1975, West German unemployment more than doubled, to 3.4 per cent. In France there was also a sharp rise, to 4.2 per cent from 2.9.

Since then western Germany's rise has continued, reaching 6.5 per cent last year. That percentage does not include the former East Germany, which has been united with West Germany throughout the 1990s. German government figures show the same trend for the country as a whole, with even greater unemployment in the east.

French unemployment reached 11.5 per cent last year and Italy's 12 per cent — more than twice the US rate. Figures for Japan, Germany, France and Italy have continued to edge up in 1996.

Britain's joblessness peaked at 11.8 per cent 1983 and has since dropped, but only to 8.3 per cent.

John Howard, director of international policy and programmes for the US Chamber of Commerce, saw the difference in trends as a sign of US economic strength.

London shares close at record high

LONDON, Aug 17: Share prices closed at a record high on the London Stock Exchange Friday, reports AP.

The Financial Times-Stock Exchange 100-share index was up 35.5 points or 0.9 per cent at 3872.9. The previous record, set on April 19, was 3857.1.

The Financial Times 30-share index was up 22.6 points or 0.8 per cent at 2824.5. Volume was 561.7 million shares compared to 501.4 million shares on Thursday.

Korean Air Lines reports loss

SEOUL, Aug 17: Korean Air Lines Co. said Friday it lost 253.82 billion won, or 309.2 million dollars in the first half of this year, compared with a net profit of 77.54 billion won a year earlier, reports AP.

Sales rose 7.8 per cent to 1,705 trillion won in the first half.

The airlines said its profits were hurt by the effect of a weaker won on its foreign-currency debts, and by higher depreciation costs for its aircraft and equipment.

Plan to privatise Indian Airlines

NEW DELHI, Aug 17: The Indian government planning to divest 51 per cent of its equity in state-run Indian Airlines and inject 225 million dollars in the ailing domestic carrier in a bid to turn it around, officials said Friday, reports AFP.

The financial strategy has been given the final touches, and once implemented the Indian Airlines expects to wipe out the accumulated losses, a civil aviation ministry official said.

Although plans to privatise the airline sector had long been on the books, the privatisation move is the first to come to light since the centrist coalition of Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda took power at the beginning of June, replacing an economic-reform-oriented Congress (I) government.

He said 46 per cent of the equity would be held by the public and five per cent by company employees. The total equity of the airline after the public-float would be 148 million dollars.

Indian airlines needs an immediate investment of 225 million dollars to ease its liquidity crunch," the official said. Indian Airlines has requested the government to provide it 57 million dollars in compensation for flying unprofitable mandatory routes that private airlines avoid.

The airline has also asked the government for a 42-million dollar loan and a 11-mil-